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E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/27/2018
TAGS: [KCRM](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [KJUS](#) [ASEC](#) [GT](#)
SUBJECT: GPS TRACKING SYSTEM IMPLICATES DETECTIVES IN
MURDERS

REF: GUATEMALA 890 AND PREVIOUS

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires D. Lindwall for reasons 1.4
(b,d)

¶1. (C) The Global Positioning System (GPS) located in a National Civil Police (PNC) vehicle and eyewitness accounts led to the arrest of three detectives from the PNC's Division of Criminal Investigation (DINC), who were charged with the extrajudicial killings of two individuals. Arrest warrants have been issued for two other detectives and, according to PNC Deputy Director Henry Lopez, an additional five officers may be involved in the murders. It is unclear whether the DINC's ex-chief, Victor Soto, was the intellectual author of the crime, which took the lives of the ex-husband and adult son of Edilma Navarijo, Mayor of Ocos, San Marcos. Press reported a romantic relationship between Navarijo and Soto, whose reputation was already sullied by his March 2007 forced resignation from the DINC when four of his subordinates were accused of involvement in the PARLACEN murders (reftel).

¶2. (U) During Navarijo's birthday celebration on June 29, Soto had an altercation with the mayor's son that left both Soto and the son with gun wounds. Forty-five minutes after this first incident, armed men arrived at the home of Navarijo's ex-husband and killed both the ex-husband and a second son. The GPS tracking system in their vehicle placed DINC detectives at the murder scene. Speculation therefore has led some to believe that Soto ordered his former subordinates to conduct the extrajudicial killings in retaliation.

¶3. (C) Alvaro Matus, Chief Prosecutor of the Public Ministry's homicide investigation unit, said he believes that the three arrested officers are guilty of murder and is confident that they will be prosecuted and convicted. Matus told poloff that he does not believe, however, that Soto ordered the killings. According to Matus, Soto was unconscious when taken to the hospital after his injury. He therefore believes that the DINC detectives, under the influence of alcohol, acted independently to revenge the attack against their former boss. Matus further commented that Soto is too smart to have ordered a killing that could so easily implicate the former DINC chief. PNC Deputy Director Lopez said he believes that the officers involved in the murders continue to work and collaborate with Soto, even though Soto is no longer part of the PNC. According to Lopez, the officers may have acted to protect Soto based on a pre-existing understanding, even if Soto did not give them specific instructions in this instance to do so.

¶4. (C) Comment: The PNC's effective use of the GPS to land the three arrests and Matus's confidence that this case will be prosecuted are welcome developments, although we note that the Public Ministry's record for successful prosecutions remains dismal. These murders, apparently committed by elite

police officers under the influence of alcohol, yet again
underlines the dire need for reform of Guatemala's National
Civil Police.
Lindwall